

# OCFO BULLETIN



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## **CFO Advisory Council's FY 2000 Planning Session**

The Chief Financial Officer's Advisory Council (CFOAC) held its annual planning session from November 8-10, 1999. The annual sessions bring together the Department's top financial managers to share ideas and discuss common approaches to challenges and existing Department of Labor (DOL) financial management business. This year's session focused on four key areas – policies and procedures, systems, human resources, and communications.

Policies and Procedures - The topics of discussion included the debut of the Department's new Office of the Chief Financial Officer (OCFO) Financial Library (URL: <http://www.utasouth.com>). (Additional policies, procedures and other materials that are planned or underway will be included in the OCFO Library when available). Also, a decision was made to establish a CFOAC accounting subgroup to address relevant accounting issues, policies and procedures, and serve as a liaison between the DOL's accounting offices and Treasury. Issues related to Government Performance and Results Act and costing accounting policies were explored, as well as audit resolution procedures.

Systems - As a result of last year's accomplishments, the Council is excited about the impending changes planned for the DOLAR\$ Modernization effort, and is positioned to move forward on implementing a number of modernization efforts recommended by Logistics Management, Inc. Also, electronic commerce is being explored as a way to streamline the DOL purchase and travel card administrative, reporting, and payment processes.

Human Resources - A gap analysis will be conducted which will include a DOL financial management demographics profile. This information will be used to identify DOL's human resources needs and determine the steps required to reach desired goals. The CFOAC will continue its Financial Management Careers Program (*formerly know as the Financial Management Intern Program*) and share recruitment efforts with other interested Federal agencies. To enhance professional development and promote continuous learning, cross training will be encouraged and on-line course offerings will continue with the University of Maryland University College.

Communication - The CFOAC seeks to heighten communication among the financial management community by enhancing the OCFO Bulletin and encouraging input on agency issues of interest. Monthly sessions will continue with OCFO and the agencies to address accounting issues and challenges.

The Council looks forward to a productive and rewarding year. If you wish to participate in any of the activities discussed above or desire more information about the Council and its activities, contact Willa Green at 202-219-8184 x131 or by e-mail.

## **The Bar is Raised for DOL's Annual Performance and Accountability Report Project**

The Office of the Chief Financial Officer, in conjunction with the Office of Budget in OASAM is in the process of formulating the Department's FY 1999 Annual Performance and Accountability Report (APAR). This year's publication will not only provide Congress with the first statutory reporting as required by the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA), it also represents the final such report in which the accomplishments of this Administration through the Department of Labor will be fully described.

The APAR presents financial, program and performance data on the Department for FY 1999 and charts our progress in meeting our three strategic goals: Fostering a Prepared Workforce, a Secure Workforce, and Quality Workplaces. This year, we will report on each of DOL's 48 Performance goals. We have much to do, and limited time to get it all done - the report must be on the street by March 31<sup>st</sup>.

Beyond the additional information that will be provided this year, the Report will also sport an enhanced look & feel. It will have more color; higher quality paper, and photographs and stories depicting some of our accomplishments. We've set very high goals for this publication, and with the able assistance of our program agencies will accomplish them.

One of the key ways program agencies can make this project a success is to work with their GPRA contact person to submit all required materials on or before their due dates. As a reminder, final performance information is due to the Budget Office on January 7<sup>th</sup> for most program agencies and January 28<sup>th</sup> for exception areas within certain programs. Any delay will drastically increase the cost of either the production or the printing, since we cannot adjust the completion date. Any real-life anecdotes (vignettes, as we have termed them in the past) and related photos should go to the Office of Public Affairs (Meg Ingold) by December 30th.

We're looking forward to putting out a first class publication, and will keep you posted on our progress.

## **PAYROLL AND BENEFITS**

- ▶ **Interactive Payroll System (IPS)** - Over the past two years, OCFO staff has been developing and implementing a number of modifications to the Integrated Payroll System. These modifications, which have been named the Pay Adjustment System (PAS), replace the former Pay This Period Adjustment (PTPA) and were designed to provide automated user tools to deal with some of the more troublesome manual processes associated with payroll adjustments. We have been implementing in several stages to allow the financial community to use the system as soon as a new function becomes available.

The major elements of PAS and when they became, or will become available are as follows:

**Phase I (Date)**

1. New processes for Instant Good Job Awards - Only one PAS transaction needed for IPS input with that transaction creating the next day payment, as well as recording in DOLAR\$ in the same pay cycle
2. Reduced input for other Bonus/Award processing (used to take X and now takes Y)
3. Reduced input and improved calculations for current pay period adjustments

**Phase II**

1. Improved process to cancel previously made payments and recording in DOLAR\$ in the same pay cycle
2. Addition of Certification of Deposit as a separate transaction

**Phase III**

1. Improved off cycle payments that require less input and all calculations made within PAS, plus recording in DOLAR\$ in the same pay cycle.

**Earnings History Query**

The IPS data base now has an on-line query of current year Earnings History information. The intent of this process is to reduce the amount of paper consumed when formatting an Earnings History report at SunGard and to provide the data to the user as quickly as possible. The query may be done by pay period, all pay periods or by year-to-day totals.

**DOL CITED FOR EXCELLENCE IN ACCOUNTABILITY** - A *Federal Times* article, dated November 1, 1999, entitled "Federal Financial Accountability Is a Work In Progress" talks about the "willful state of accountability in the Federal government" and contains a paragraph that lists agencies with clean opinions and solid internal controls. DOL was included in the article as one of the agencies with a clean opinion and effective asset control. Ken Bresnahan thanks all financial managers for their contributions towards this noteworthy accomplishment.

**FINANCIAL POLICY ISSUANCES**

- **COST ALLOCATIONS FOR FY 1999 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS** - OCFO requested that agencies provide the methodology on how cost allocations would be handled. The financial statements are due to OIG on December 1, 1999. The statements will include the

Statement of Net Costs which require allocations for indirect costs. This year, the Statement of Net Costs will be presented in two formats: a) by DOL major Program, and b) by the eleven program outcome goals in the DOL performance plan. In order to enter the allocations into the Hyperion DOLAR\$ interface and Hyperion itself, final allocation formulas are needed. OCFO extends a "thank you" for all the work done on correcting data in DOLAR\$ for FACTS II and for expeditiously processing your FY 1999 adjustments.

- ▶ **Cost Accounting Contract** - OCFO awarded the contract to PriceWaterhouse Coopers (PWC). The contractors were on site (FPB) November 1, initially to engage in understanding DOL's business processes. OCFO has identified preliminary managerial cost accounting pilots with OSHA, VETS and the OCFO Working Capital Fund. Other agencies are invited to participate in this effort in a fuller capacity as desired. Activities are currently being coordinated with OASAM, which is focusing on performance measurement and OIG, which is focusing on data integrity. Solid performance measures should be in place before extensive cost accounting efforts are initiated. The three organizations have prepared a paper for the Deputy Secretary on what has occurred to date on performance measurement and cost accounting and what our future plans are. The current PWC contract ends in late March 2000. The first pilot will be done at a high level and later assessed to determine if a more in-depth study is needed.
- ▶ **E-Commerce Workgroup** - Since OCFO and OASAM have been plugging away at electronic commerce for some time, from the payment and procurement standpoint, Patricia Lattimore and Kenneth Bresnahan decided that an E-Business/Commerce workgroup was needed. Through agency participation, this workgroup will ensure that compliance issues imposed by The Debt Collection Improvement Act, the Paperwork Reduction Act, etc., are addressed Department wide. Also, this workgroup will facilitate a Departmental management process to research, identify and managed DOL E-commerce initiatives. The EB/EC Workgroup held a Kick-Off meeting on November 5, 1999, to share information and gain insights on where we are and where we are going with DOL EB/EC opportunities and plans.
- ▶ **WCF CYCLE** - The WCF cycle will have an early closing in December. The cycle will close on Tuesday, December 21. Agencies will be allowed to redistribute their WCF expenditures from December 22 through December 30. To the greatest extent possible, OASAM Servicing Finance Offices should ensure that WCF accruals for December have been recorded in DOLAR\$ by December 20.
- ▶ **Funds Control** - A Funds Control memorandum, dated October 22, 1999, and co-signed by Patricia Lattimore and Kenneth Bresnahan, was distributed to all Agency Administrative Officers and Financial Managers. The memorandum documents DOL's internal administrative control of fund procedures for full year appropriations, as well as for long- and short-term interim funding periods. During this most recent short-term funding period, all agencies worked with OB to develop the agreed upon apportionment amounts. OB has entered agency apportionments in DOLAR\$ and the OCFO has entered agency allotments in DOLAR\$. The first payroll for FY 2000 was entered in DOLAR\$ on October 28 and funds control was activated on October 29, 1999. September 30 final reports were available by November 3 and October 31 reports were available on November 10.

Agencies were reminded that, if they needed more fund availability than provided in the automatic

CR, they must prepare an apportionment request and forward to OB.

For each fiscal year, funds control will be activated no later than the end of October.

## **DOLAR\$ MODERNIZATION**

- ▶ **Facts II** - OCFO has been working on and has completed systems modernization. The Treasury test went well. FACTS II will allow Treasury and OMB to gain more DOL financial information, such as information on reimbursables. Also, in the past travel advances could be prerecorded. Now, under FACTS II, all obligations must be in place first before advances can be made and appropriate transaction codes must be provided. Most FACTS II changes will fall on OB. Of particular interest is the Category B coding. Separate RCCs must identify individual Category B programs.

**REGIONAL TRANSIT SUBSIDY** - Regional Transit Subsidy reimbursement requests will be processed at 2pm EST on December 16th. Payments should be in employees' bank accounts by December 21st.

## **TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES**

- ▶ **UMUC Courses** - Courses are proceeding as scheduled. OCFO realizes that some administrative aspects of course offerings need to be improved, such as employee commitment/stake in taking the course. The signing of a training agreement may be incorporated into the process. In the future, OCFO will encourage the training provider to incorporate aspects of Federal financial management into dedicated DOL course curriculum, where possible. Work is currently underway to identify and announce course offerings for the Spring 2000 semester.

**Financial Management Careers Program (FMCP)** - OCFO requests notification of the number of FMCP slots agencies will have available in FY 2000. This will help shape marketing plans. During the week of November 2, OCFO held a meeting with five or six other Federal agency representatives to strategize on and leverage government-wide recruitment efforts. Agencies are invited to participate and provide comments on a government-wide recruitment plan. The materials developed by OCFO were well received by other Federal departments.

## **ATA FAQ**

(Frequently Asked Questions)

**Question: When an employee leaves the Department, what procedures should be followed in the ATA?**

**Answer:** Timekeepers and supervisors should maintain an ATA timesheet for an employee who has left the DOL until receiving notification from the servicing payroll office that the employee has been “separated” in the official payroll system called the Interactive Payroll System (IPS). The reason to do this is that it is possible for erroneous salary payment to be made to former employees after they have officially separated from the Department because the DOL uses a payroll processing methodology called “exception reporting.” “Exception reporting” means that the IPS is designed to automatically pay all employees who are have an “Active” status their regular salary payments each pay period unless data are input into the IPS to stop the payment. Due to the timing of personnel actions, some separated employees continue to have an “Active” status in the IPS beyond their actual date of separation. To stop a salary payment for a separated employee, an ATA timesheet showing zero (0) hours worked by the employee must be prepared, certified, and transmitted to the IPS.

When an employee separates from the DOL, timekeepers and supervisors should:

2. Contact the servicing payroll office and request to be notified when the employee is “Separated” in the IPS.
3. Prepare and certify a zero (0) hour timesheet for the former employee for each pay period the employee is still “Active” in the IPS.
4. In the pay period you receive notification that the employee is “Separated” in the IPS, delete the employee from the ATA by deleting the employee’s User ID. Instructions for deleting a User ID are contained in the *Timekeeper & Supervisor Quick Reference Guide* and are provided below.

Attachment A provides detailed instructions on how to prepare a zero (0) hour timesheet when an employee has left the DOL but is still “Active” in the IPS and how to prepare the timesheet when an employee works less than four hours in the last pay period on-board.

**Question: Who can delete an employee from the ATA?**

**Answer:** Only a supervisor or a timekeeper can delete an employee from the ATA.

**Question: How do I delete an employee who has left DOL and has a “Separated” status in the IPS?**

**Answer:** You delete an employee from the ATA system by deleting the employee’s User ID using the User ID Maintenance function.

If the employee has Supervisor, Back-up Supervisor, Timekeeper, or Back-up Timekeeper Permissions, delete these Permissions before deleting the User ID. The ATA will not let you delete the user until these permissions have been deleted.

In addition, the ATA will not permit you to delete an employee if there are timesheets for previous pay periods that are Open, Uncertified, or in Reconcile status. Thus, all previous pay period timesheets must be certified. Frequently, offices find that an employee needs to be deleted for a pay period during the time period that they are closing and certifying timesheets for that pay period. This often is on the Monday following the end of the pay period. When this happens, a zero hour timesheet must be completed for that pay period because, remember, the Monday during which timesheets are being certified is the beginning of a new pay period. For example, if you learn that an employee has been separated in the IPS in pay period 22 but forget to delete the employee’s User ID during pay period 22 and remember to do so on the Monday following the end of pay period 22, you will need to complete a zero-hour timesheet for that employee for pay period 22 in order to delete the employee’s User ID in pay period 23. To complete a zero-hour timesheet, use the instructions in Attachment A.

Also, before deleting a User ID, you must set the “Employment Status” field on the employee’s ATA MER Basic Tab for the current pay period to “Separated.”

Once any Supervisor, Back-up Supervisor, Timekeeper, and Back-up Timekeeper permissions have been deleted, all timesheets up to the current pay period have been certified, and “Employment Status” field on the ATA MER Basic Tab for the current pay period has been set to “Separated,” the employee’s User Id may be deleted. The timesheet for the current pay period does not have to be certified. It can have a status of “Empty” or “Open.”

To delete a User ID:

1. Click on the **Access** menu.
2. Click on the **User ID Maintenance** menu item.
3. Click on the name of the employee you wish to delete.
4. Click on the **Delete** button or press the <F4> key.
5. You will receive a pop-up message asking if you want to delete the user. Click on the **Yes** button in the pop-up message.

## Attachment A

**ATA Procedures When Employee Separates from DOL**

Do not delete an employee from the ATA until the employee's separation action has been processed through the Personnel System and the employee's status in the Interactive Payroll System (IPS) has been changed from "Active" to "Separated." The reason not to delete the employee from the ATA is that if the employee is no longer working for DOL and his/her status is still "Active" in the IPS, the employee will automatically receive his/her regular salary payment unless the IPS is given information to stop the salary payment. The way to stop the salary payment is to input into the IPS the employee's time worked for the pay period as zero (0) hours. This is done in the ATA by the timekeeper accessing the separated employee's timesheet and setting up a "zero-hour" timesheet. Zero hours worked will be certified by the supervisor and input into the IPS along with time and attendance data for the other employees in the office. When you have confirmed that the employee's status in the IPS is "Separated," you should delete the employee's User ID from the ATA.

**When Employee Has Left DOL but Employee is Not Yet "Separated" in the IPS**

The following should be done until the servicing payroll office verifies that the employee's status is "Separated" in the IPS.

1. The first step is to change the "Employment Status" field on the ATA MER, Basic Tab to "Separated" and make the employee a "Non-ATA User."

As timekeeper or supervisor, go to the employee's ATA MER, Basic Tab in the pay period the employee is no longer on-board for the entire pay period.

1. Change the "Employment Status" field to **Separated**.

You will receive a message saying:

"Empty timesheet exists for this employee. Supervisor or Timekeeper should Close & Certify the timesheet. System will change tour hours for this employee to 0 and set this employee to Non-ATA User."

- S** Click on the OK button inside the message.

- S** The hours in the "Tour Hours" field will be changed to zero (0).

- S** The check mark in the "ATA User" field will be removed. With the check mark removed from the "ATA User" field, the employee is made a Non-ATA User. This means that the timekeeper or supervisor can enter data into the employee's timesheet and close the timesheet.

- S** Click on the **Save** button.

You will receive two system prompts. Respond to the prompts.

- S** You will then receive the MER Modification Comment window which will show the comments the system will print on the Comment tab about the changes you have made. Add the following comment in the Comment Window: Employee separated from the DOL on MM/DD/YY but is still "Active" in the IPS.

- S** Click on the OK button in the window.

- S** Click on the red **X** button to leave the Basic Tab.



2. The second step is to complete a zero (0) hour timesheet for the employee.
  - S** Click on the **SC&E** menu.
  - S** Click on the **SC&E** menu item.
  - S** Click on the **plus (+) sign** beside the office acronym/timekeeper code to show the list of employees in that office.
  - S** Double click on the separated employee's name. The employee's timesheet will display.
  - S** For the first Monday under Work Hours, enter the "In" time as 10:00am and the "Out" time as 10:01 am. The total work hours on the timesheet and the SC&E line item for the employee will be zero (0).
    - Click on the **Save** button.
    - Click on the **Close Timesheet** button.
3. The supervisor can now certify the timesheet. If your current permission is Supervisor, the Certify button will be active, and you can certify the timesheet.

As long as the next pay period's timesheet has not yet been opened, the changes made to the ATA MER in step 1 will carry forward to the next pay period.

**When Employee Works Less Than Tour Hours in the Last Pay Period On-Board**

1. Go to the employee's ATA MER, Basic Tab for the last pay period:
  - Change the "Tour Hours" field to match the number of hours claimed (that is, work and non-work hours) on the timesheet.
  - Change the "Employment Basis" field to **Part-time**. (This needs to be done because the "Tour Hours" are no longer 80.) This change will cause the "Flexitime Type" field to change to **N/A** (not applicable).
  - Click on the Save button. You will receive two system prompts; respond to the prompts.
  - S** You will then receive the MER Modification Comment window which will show the comments that the system will print on the Comment Tab about the changes you have made. Enter in the Comment Window, "Employee separated on MM/DD/YY."
2. The employee should close the timesheet before leaving.
3. If the employee is no longer available, the timekeeper should reset the employee's password and act as the employee, and close the timesheet. If the timekeeper acts as the employee, the timekeeper should add a comment that this was done because the employee has already left the Department.
4. If the employee is still "Active" in the Interactive Payroll System during the next pay period, make the employee a "Non-ATA User" and complete a "zero (0) hour" timesheet for the employee.

**In the Pay Period the Servicing Payroll Office Confirms the Employee is Separated in the IPS.**

When you have received confirmation that the employee is no longer Active in the IPS, you may delete the employee from the ATA by deleting the User ID. ATA users with Timekeeper or Supervisor permissions can delete User IDs. Remember, before you can delete a User ID, you must delete all Supervisor, Back-up Supervisor, Timekeeper, and Back-up Timekeeper permissions for the employee, and you must set the "Employment Status" field on the ATA MER Basic Tab to "Separated."

**DOLAR\$ AVAILABILITY SCHEDULE****November 15 through December 20, 1999**

Following are the dates and hours that DOLAR\$ will be available from November 15 through December 20, 1999. Any Agency Financial Manager or Regional Financial Officer who requires a change to this schedule should call Karen Tekleberhan at (202) 219-8314, ext. 166, or Naomi Franklin at (202) 219-6922, ext. 153.

**November 1999**

Mon.,	Nov. 15	-	Fri.,	Nov. 19	8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Sat.,	Nov. 20	-	Sun.,	Nov. 21	System Closed
Mon.,	Nov. 22	-	Fri.,	Nov. 26	8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Sat.,	Nov. 27	-	Sun.,	Nov. 28	System Closed
Mon.,	Nov. 29	-	Tue.,	Nov. 30	8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

**December 1999**

Wed.,	Dec. 1	-	Fri.,	Dec. 3	8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Sat.,	Dec. 4	-	Sun.,	Dec. 5	System Closed
Mon.,	Dec. 6	-	Fri.,	Dec. 10	8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Sat.,	Dec. 11	-	Sun.,	Dec. 12	System Closed
Mon.,	Dec. 13	-	Fri.,	Dec. 17	8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Sat.,	Dec. 18	-	Sun.,	Dec. 19	System closed
Mon.,	Dec. 20	-	Mon.,	Dec. 20	8:00a.m. to 8:00 p.m.